



## King County

### Dow Constantine

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CLERK  
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

The Honorable Larry Gossett  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
COURTHOUSE

April 19, 2011

Dear Councilmember Gossett:

This letter transmits a motion providing direction for King County's near-term actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prepare for the impacts of climate change, and reduce King County's operational environmental footprint. This motion rescinds and replaces Climate and Energy Motion 12362 adopted in 2006.

Climate change is already resulting in significant, observed changes in King County, from decreased mountain snowpack to warmer temperatures. Climate change is projected to have significant impacts from exacerbating flood risks, to negatively affecting salmon and forests, to creating new public health challenges.

The 2010 King County Strategic Plan established environmental sustainability as one of King County's eight goals, and outlines objectives and strategies to reduce climate pollution, prepare for the effects of climate change on the environment, human health and the economy, and minimize King County's operational environmental footprint.

King County has already taken steps to reduce emissions through climate-friendly land use, transportation, and health policies; conversion of our fleet to hybrid and electric vehicle technologies; protection of more than 180,000 acres of open space and resource lands; implementation of waste-to-energy projects at our wastewater treatment plants and landfill; and commitments to ongoing improvements in energy efficiency in our buildings and vehicles. These actions are not only reducing emissions, but are also saving money.

King County will only continue to make progress toward the long-term goal of reducing climate emissions by eighty percent by 2050 through a series of specific actions with measurable outcomes.

The 2006 Energy and Climate Motion outlined a series of near-term goals and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change. The time horizon for many of these actions is now complete, and it is time to redouble efforts and establish the next set of specific actions to reduce emissions and prepare for climate change.

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This motion aligns actions with the adopted 2010 King County Strategic Plan, 2010 King County Energy Plan, and the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040. It also helps to focus work on the next major update to the King County Comprehensive Plan and draw from a more complete understanding of King County's emissions profile based on new countywide emissions inventories, which will be finalized this spring.

King County's operational emissions are only one piece of the puzzle. Real progress on reducing emissions will only come through collaborative work with cities to establish meaningful countywide emissions reduction targets, and to carry out land use, building, and transportation practices that support this goal. The County also needs to inspire and support actions by individuals and businesses to take steps that will result in real progress toward long-term goals. This motion outlines specific areas for collaboration with cities, businesses, and citizens.

Adoption of this motion will focus and enhance accountability for King County's actions related to climate change and implement core objectives of the King County Strategic Plan. I urge the Council to adopt this motion.

If you have any questions about this motion, please contact Megan Smith, Environmental Policy Advisor, at 206-263-9605, or [megan.smith@kingcounty.gov](mailto:megan.smith@kingcounty.gov).

Sincerely,



Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Acting Chief of Staff

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget

Megan Smith, Environmental Policy Advisor, King County Executive Office (KCEO)

Carrie Cihak, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives, KCEO

Harold Taniguchi, Director, Department of Transportation

Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Matt Kuharic, Sr. Climate Change Specialist, DNRP

John Starbard, Director, Department of Development and Environmental Services

David Fleming, Director, Seattle-King County Department of Public Health

Caroline Whalen, County Administrative Officer, Department of Executive Services (DES)

Ken Guy, Director, Finance and Business Operations Division, DES

Jackie MacLean, Director, Department of Community and Human Services